



## Chesapeake Bay Program

*Science. Restoration. Partnership.*

### Forestry Workgroup Meeting

Feb 7, 2024

[Meeting Materials](#)

Nicole Angelo  
Cassie Davis  
Lydia Brinkley  
Julie Mawhorter  
Ned Brockmeyer  
Celine Colbert  
Orsi Lazar  
Robbie Coville  
Derrick McDonald  
Matt Keefer  
Emily Heller  
Jeremy McGill

Anne Hairston Strang  
Dexter Locke,  
Craig Highfield  
Dan Coy  
Katie Brownson  
Rob Schnable  
Bay Hanson  
Lorenzo Cinalli  
Susan Minnemeyer  
Keshia Braunskill  
Alanna Crowley  
James Palmer

Tristan Puffenberger  
Terry Lasher  
Lara Johnson, VA  
Jenna Talbot, DNREC  
Andrew Koeser  
John Wolf  
Kathryn Barnhart  
Helen Golimowski

### **Watershed Resource Registry – Kathryn Barnhart, EPA**

Multi-faceted tool developed primarily to help fed and state agencies improve decision-making for environmental resources, particularly those covered by CWA. Kathryn gave background information on the tool and walked through how the tool functions.

Kathryn also talked about the WRR in relation to the Bay Program. It has the ability to integrate and streamline regulatory programs, create a statewide vision for preservation and restoration, and reveal data needs within a given state. The WRR is looking at potentially integrating specific Bay Program tools; The CBP has talked about needing a “one-stop-shop”, and integration with the WRR could be a good resource for partners.

Kathryn highlighted potential projects to integrate CBP tools better with the WRR. These include:

- Development of a tree planting/riparian-featured collection of layers.
- Update with new higher-resolution hydrography and land use data.
- Advising the update of riparian suitability analyses to reflect updated threshold criteria and data.

Kathryn asked the group if there would be any interest in pursuing this collaborative effort and if there is anyone who would like to volunteer to participate in monthly-quarterly discussions for the integration of needed data and tools into the WRR for analysis. If you are interested, email Kathryn ([Barnhart.Katheryn@epa.gov](mailto:Barnhart.Katheryn@epa.gov))

*Discussion*

It was noted that this might be people's first exposure to the WRR, and folks might not quite know how to assist and what they can do with the tool.. Kathryn clarified that involvement with the WRR would not have to add too much to a schedule. Volunteering could mean being a point of contact to test some suitability analysis. It can be flexible!

Katie Brownson clarified that the WRR is a state-level tool, so participation is dependent on what your state is already doing. This tool could be really useful in the forestry world as it can be a place to view a lot of data. A tech advisory committee seems like a great venue for collaboration.

It was asked if the WRR gives context to why a project was done:

The WRR has layers that reflect the current status of wetlands and mitigation and permit layers. It was unclear if the WRR is currently used to count toward restoration goals.

John Wolf gave some context as to why the Bay Program might continue to invest in the WRR, as it will help streamline data analysis and be a one-stop shop.

Enthusiasm was expressed towards seeing why a project was done. It could be a real opportunity for collaboration.

Feedback on the WRR was given:

- Not having a download button seems like it could be a problem.
- Integrated web mapping tools can have issues with data quality as you layer on more and more sources of information.
- A lot of web maps and tools don't have specific end users, and if you are trying to serve a lot of different people, then it doesn't perform super well because it is too much. On the other hand, if it was hyper-specific, then it would have too many tools. There just seem to be a lot of challenges.

#### **GIT Funded Project on Regional Tree Supply – Andrew Koeser, University of Florida**

Dr. Koeser presented an overview of the GIT-funded project on Addressing Regional Tree Supply Challenges and Opportunities, which is just getting started. The goal of the project is to identify existing market constraints that limit the availability, diversity, and quality of nursery trees for urban plantings in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Along with identifying opportunities to create a sustainable and equitable supply of trees for urban use. Dr. Koeser then reviewed the project outline:

- Establish a regional steering committee.
- Stakeholder focus group interviews ("Rapid Assessment").
- 1-day virtual forum.

The project team has begun the search for the focus groups. They are asking the Forestry Workgroup to provide recommended contacts for focus groups on this topic via the [Potential Focus Group Participants spreadsheet](#).

#### **Discussion**

Understanding ordinance restrictions and procurement issues would be a really useful outcome.

Q: Will you be breaking down nurseries by size specifications? A: The project is really focused on urban trees and that market.

It was noted that the USFS is also making efforts to research seedling supplies and expand state nurseries. We could pull together another meeting/analysis around seedling tree supply in the Chesapeake separately from this project.

### **Tree Canopy Work Plan - Julie Mawhorter, USFS**

Julie recapped the Bay Program's Adaptive Management process (SRS-Strategy Review System) for the Tree Canopy outcome and solicited input on the recommendations from the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Tree Canopy Funding and Policy Roundtable. The workgroup then used a [jambaord](#) to vote on which priorities should be elevated to CBP leadership in June. Discussion about which items would be good projects for our next two-year work plan also occurred.

Some of the suggestions to add to the work plan included:

- Maintenance, and group coordination about workforce development at the regional level.
- Identifying who has tree canopy goals. Are there more communities that have goals? Inventory of goals. Engagement to raise the bar.
- We need new maintenance models. To many public works departments, tree "care" is removal or gross pruning.
- Writing a climate resilience strategy guide could be a good GIT-funded project.
- Supporting tree tenders or tree support groups. Strengthening network as we see more grants going out.

### **Round Robin**

PA: Hired a Woodland Stewardship Section Chief, [Community Conservation Partnership Program Branch funding](#) is open until early April with \$4 million dollars in IRA funding, and an additional 1.6 million from the Commonwealth for Community and watershed forestry practices.

A couple announcements on PA agroforestry. Reach out to [rcoville@pa.gov](mailto:rcoville@pa.gov) if you have feedback or questions. Here's a new summary of funding to support agroforestry <http://www.bit.ly/PAagroforestryassistance>. Review and corrections are appreciated!

PA DCNR and other collaborators are launching a PA Agroforestry Peer Network to bring practitioners together, with emphasis on demonstration sites. An interest survey is launching this week <http://www.bit.ly/PAAPNsuey>.

MD: MD Forest service is staffing up, with more folks coming on board. Daniel Coy just started as the Urban and Community Forestry Supervisor. [The Community Forestry Catalyst Fund](#) has money from IRA and has three tracks for folks to apply through: 1. Site Readiness, 2. Implementation, and 3. Capacity Building. Applications will be taken until March 14. This fund will be open twice a year every year for the next 4 years.

NRCS: Conservation Buffer Training is in the process of being run again. There will be an opportunity for the FWG to give input on what changes or additions should be made to the course after they meet in April.

VA: The Forest Legacy program just hired a program manager and a position that focuses primarily on conservation and conservation easement programs. Virginia received 2 sentinel landscapes designations back in the summer (the Potomac Sentinel Landscape and the Tidewater Sentinel Landscape). VA will be hiring coordinators for each of those sentinel landscapes. VA will also be releasing a Riparian Forest for Landowners Program, which will be led by Deya Ramsden and is meant to be more flexible in trying different forms of establishment techniques. It will be funded in part through UCF funding with some water quality funding as well.

FWG: If you are interested in our quarterly Chesapeake Agroforestry meeting, please reach out to Katie Brownson to get onto the meeting list.

NY: Waiting on funding from the state to continue forestry work. 14 folks should be hired at the USC to help with stewardship. Coordination with contractors to perform stewardship on sites.

WV (Cacapon Institute): The Watershed Association with Morgan County got a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust. They will be holding a Charrette on the greening of route 522.